Newsletter of the Birdwatchers' Society of Andhra Pradesh
New Series Volume 11 Number 6 August 2014

FIELD OUTING: Sunday, 24th August 2014: Nehru Zoological Park. Meeting point: Zoo main gate, 6.30AM.

Established in October 1959 and opened to the public in October 1963, the 380-acre Zoo, located adjacent to the Mir Alam Tank, offers its denizens a variety of habitats, including patches of forest, a water body, grassland, etc. Not surprisingly, the zoo has usually yielded a good selection of bird sightings. The various enclosures hold a lot of small ground and tree birds, as well as a number of water birds. Eurasian Thick-knees have been known to breed near the Sambhar enclosure. There have been several interesting sightings and observations in the past, and this trip should be no exception. There is also the added attraction of the Butterfly Park within the zoo. This will be a half-day trip. For further details and to co-ordinate, please contact Ms Surekha Aitabathula (99490-38532).

INDOOR MEETING: Talk by Mr Gubbala Ramakrishna Rao, Forest Utilization Officer, Telangana Forest Department, on 'Conservation Initiatives - Kawal Tiger Reserve'.
Tuesday, 5th August 2014, 6.30PM: Goethe-zentrum Hyderabad, 20 Journalist's Colony, Road No. 3, Banjara Hills, Hyderabad – 500 034. (For directions, please contact 94905-09251 or 040-65526443/23350040)

In his earlier assignment, Mr Rao was the District Forest Officer, Wild Life Management at the Kawal Tiger Reserve, Adilabad Dist. Drawing on his rich experience, Mr Rao will enlighten us on the efforts taken not only to preserve but also improve the tiger population, which has become dangerously low, all over the country.

Trip Report – Srisailam Tiger Reserve and Uma Maheshwar, 21st-22nd June 2014

Shafaat Ulla

Photo: Prashant Kumar

We had planned this trip twice before but both the times it had to be cancelled due to inclement weather. We were, however, lucky the third time as the day dawned bright and clear. Originally we had planned to leave on Sunday morning, but some members suggested we go a day earlier and stay overnight so that we could start birding right from sun up. We, therefore, left on Saturday morning at 8:00 am from Punjagutta in a convoy of six cars, courtesy Lawrence, Guru, Haragopal, Gautama, Madan and Prashant. We were 20 in all and the convoy set off on a journey of 160 kms.

Our first halt was at Amangal for a very satisfying but short 'tiffin stop' and then we proceeded to Dindi Reservoir which was our second halt. It was extremely windy here and the water level was quite high. Other than Egrets and Common Coot (*Fulica atra*), there was nothing else to report. We did spot a pair of Pied Crested Cuckoos (*Clamator jacobinus*), the harbinger of rains. But unfortunately the rain never came. From here we proceeded to Mananur. En route we found lot of tree-ripened mangoes being sold all along the highway. The temptation was too much and we stopped and helped ourselves to a few kilos of the fruit, courtesy Nandu. Finally, by early afternoon, we made it to Mananur, where the Government has made a nice tourist complex, with cottages and dormitory accommodation. We were booked here, thanks to Mr. Ramakrishna Rao, Forest Utilisation Officer at Head Office, and Mr. Venkatramana, DFO, Achampet. After a quick lunch at a nearby *dhaba*, where Vikram joined us in his Innova, we proceeded straight to Farhabad, situated right inside the sanctuary. Special permission was given to us by Mr. Venkatesh Goud, FRO, to take our vehicles inside the sanctuary.

Crested Serpent Eagle (Photo: Hemant Kumar)

As soon as we entered the reserve forest after completing the formalities at the check-post, we spotted a Crested Serpent Eagle (S*pilornis cheela*) sitting serenely on a low branch, probably after a good meal. These eagles are known to be expert fliers under the forest canopies.

Proceeding slowly, we passed the ruins of a hunting lodge, which we were given to understand belonged to a *nawab* during the yesteryears. Choudhry, Rao and Vijay could not contain their curiosity and were exploring the ruins inside out when our guide told us that black bears normally sleep in the ruins! This was enough for us to hurry back to the safety of our cars and resumed our birding. The forest was teeming with wildlife as we saw quite a few Spotted Deer (*Axis axis*), a lone female Sambar (C*ervus unicolor*) and a lone Sloth Bear (*Melurus ursinus)* foraging near an ant hill.

Oriental Magpie Robin (Photo: Prashant Kumar)

We finally reached Farhabad and the land ended, giving way to a sheer drop of about 2000 feet, with a breathtaking view of the valley below. A Bonelli's Eagle (*Hieraaetus fasciatus) w*as hovering majestically over the valley, assisted by strong head wind and updraft. While some of us were enjoying the view of the valley, others went about birding around the area, and spotted a Painted Spurfowl (*Galloperdix lunulata)* and Binu managed to get a nice shot.

Painted Spurfowl (Photo: Binu Nair)

This visit to Farhabad brought back pleasant memories, especially to Moorty and me as 22 of us had camped here in July 2002 and had stayed in the beautiful guest house, which now lies in ruins - it had been blown up by Naxalites, two weeks after our stay. After spending couple of hours birding here, followed by a group photo session, we headed back as it was getting dark and as per rules we had to be out of the sanctuary before sunset. En route we saw a bird perched on top of a tree and Jayati correctly identified it as a Brown-headed Barbet (*Megalaima zeylanica*). It had become almost dark by the time we exited the sanctuary and headed back to the tourist camp at Mananur. While driving, we saw a few owls in flight but could not identify them.

Dinner was waiting for us at the *Ekbal dhaba*, meticulously planned and ordered by Haragopal. After having our fill, we all retired for the night. The four ladies - Surekha, Bindu, Meena and Jayati made themselves comfortable in a cottage while the rest of us occupied the bunk beds in the dormitory. The place was surprisingly well kept, with clean bathrooms.

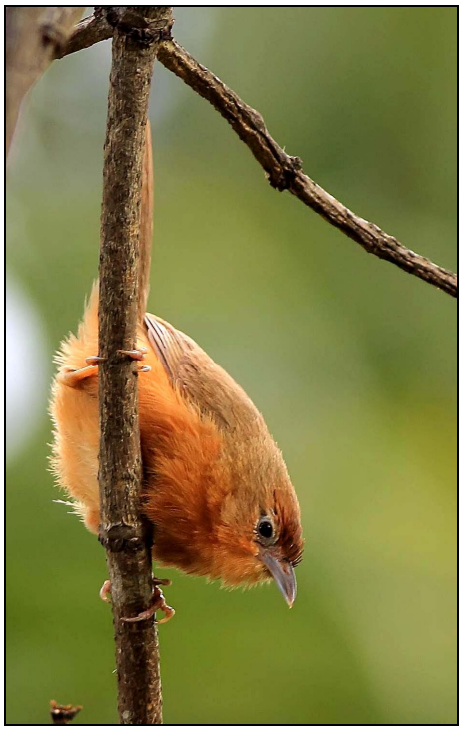
Indian Robin (Photo: JVD Moorty)

Next day, Sunday, we all got ready early morning and after a quick breakfast, started for Uma Maheshwar at about 07:00A.M. for a short journey of about 30 kms. For the benefit of those who have not been to this place, I would like to quote a paragraph from our PITTA of January 1999, beautifully described by Aasheesh Pittie in his own inimitable style, during a BSAP trip on 22nd November, 1998, when he was the group leader:

"Umamaheshwaram is a Sacred Grove, around an old temple of Lord Shiva. The shrine is constructed on a thin ledge running along the side of a hill that rears 200 m from the surrounding planes (c. 500m above MSL) to form the Amrabad Plateau, a part of Nagarjunasagar-Srisailam Wild Life Sanctuary. At this particular spot, the plateau forms a 'C' shaped amphitheatre with stunning scenic impact when viewed from the plains. These hills are formed of lateritic soils and support dry-deciduous forests. Uma Maheshwar is clothed in a unique moist-deciduous flora, as perennial streams, that leach the sheer rock above the temple, feed it. During monsoon these hills transform into a curtain of waterfalls that generate enough humidity and moisture to sustain bryophytic flora amidst musical liquid splashing. Moss carpets moist unused surfaces in green velvet. Radiating sprays of fern abound in cracks and crevices, rooted to and sustained by negligible quantities of soil."

Puff-throated Babbler (Photo: Hemant Kumar)

We parked at the foot hill and started birding right away around the lush growth and thickly forested area around an old stepped well. There was a birding feast awaiting us here and we saw many species and quite a few were lifers for some us. To name a few, we were entertained by three different types of babblers - Puff-throated (*Pellorneum ruficeps)*, Tawny-bellied **(***Dumetia hyperythra)* and Yellow-eyed (*Chrysomma sinense).*

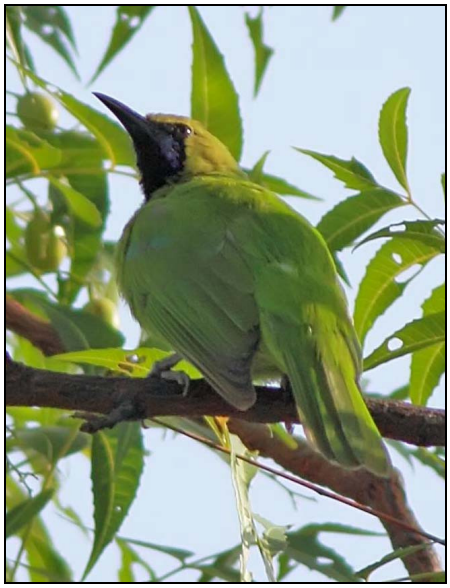


Tawny-bellied Babbler (Photo: Hemant Kumar)

Yellow-eyed Babbler (Photo: Vikram Penmetsa)

Flycatchers were aplenty – White-browed Fantail **(***Rhipidura aureola),* Tickell's Blue (*Cyornis tickelliae)* and Asian Paradise **(***Terpsiphone paradisi).* We also spotted a Black-naped Monarch **(***Hypothymis azurea).*

Black-naped Monarch (Photo: Vikram Penmetsa)



Jerdon's Leafbird (Photo: Hemant Kumar)

Our list kept growing as we spotted a Jerdon's Leafbird (*Chloropsis jerdoni*) and a Blue-faced Malkoha (*Phaenicophaeus viridirostris).*

It was almost 9:00 am and it was time to drive up the *ghat* road to the temple for further birding. After having parked our cars, we headed towards the walkway and the first to greet us was the White-bellied Drongo (*Dicrurus caerulescens)* making aerial forays.

White-bellied Drongo (Photo: JVD Moorty)

Just below was a wet spot with water droplets falling from above. Here, Red-rumped Swallows (*Hirundo daurica)* were collecting wet clay for their nests. Hemant got a nice shot, as did others. We walked the entire length of the ledge, enjoying not only the view of the valley below, but also a variety of birds.

Red-rumped Swallow (Photo: Hemant Kumar)

While returning we were met by Dr. Vikramjit, who had driven directly here, accompanied by his nephew. We were exchanging pleasantries when we noticed an Indian Giant Squirrel (*Ratufa indica)* frolicking on a tree just below the parapet wall.

Just then Moorty, Gautama and Sathvik called us excitedly and what do we see, the iconic Yellow-throated Bulbul (*Pycnonotus xantholaemus)!* This is a very rare bird, endemic only to some hilly areas of South India.

Yellow-throated Bulbul (Photo: Prashant Kumar)

Before heading home, we spotted a White-browed Bulbul (*Pycnonotus luteolus*) and an Oriental Honey-buzzard (*Pernis ptilorhyncus)* flying high over the valley, probably eyeing quite a few honeycombs dangling invitingly from the rock faces!

We piled into our respective cars and headed home. En route we spotted a nice *dhaba* where we made a well deserved 'brunch stop'. The opportunity was utilised to compare notes and Sathvik and Bindu announced a list of about 75 species, after eliminating doubtful sightings. We started again and after collecting some end-of-the-season mangoes from the road side, reached Hyderabad just in time for lunch.

Photo: Hemant Kumar

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SUPERLATIVE BIRDING AT EAGLENEST

Surekha Aitabathula

It rained lifers out there in Eaglenest Wild Life Sanctuary. An hour's drive up from Tainga Valley in Arunachal Pradesh, the north-eastern edge of India has a landscape and bird life to die for. Our first pit stop from Hyderabad was Guwahati and the next one was Bhalukpong. This is a small town located in the southern reaches of the Himalayas in the West Khameng District of Arunachal Pradesh. Bhalukpong straddles the Assam-Arunachal Pradesh border. We stayed in a serene and expansive guest house that overlooked the River Jia Bharoli, on the other side of which is Assam's Nameri Wild Life Sanctuary. Nameri continues into Arunachal where it is called Pakhui Wild Life Sanctuary. Similarly, the River Jia Bharoli in Assam becomes Khameng in Arunachal. The river tumbling over clean, soft and round pebbles, is paradisical with you travelling on the road next to it and the tallest of tall green mountains flanking it.

We began birding en route as our Bolero climbed the ghat road towards Eaglenest. Oriental Pied Hornbill (*Anthracoceros albirostris*) raised the curtains on some really spectacular birding which was in store for us! As we gained altitude, the fog got thicker and thicker, sometimes obliterating the whole landscape!

Our driver Sanu was a very cheerful, ear-pierced twenty-year-old expert at the wheel. At the Lama Camp we met our guide Phurpa Tshering who had outstanding knowledge of birds and was a wizard at recognising bird calls! Tashi was the camp help, who served breakfast, lunch and dinner, with a smile. Abu was a brilliant cook or is it Masterchef? If his curries and omelettes were out of this world, then his desserts were to kill or die for! Believe it or not! Abu made Creme Brulee that was more delicious than the one I ate in Taj Krishna, Hyderabad.

Dawn breaks at 04:30AM in the north-east. When we step out of our tents in the morning after a good night's sleep in sleeping bags and a quilt over it, the Lama Camp gives you a stupendous view of the snow-peaked mountains on the horizon, beyond which I am told, is Tibet. I never failed to say Good Morning Tibet on each of our six days at the camp. Somehow it felt good to greet Tibet despite its invisibility to me. The sun plays hide and seek throughout the day. The constantly shape-shifting clouds which look like pure white, superior quality cotton advance slowly, caressing the mountains as they pass by.

Four kms from Lama Camp is Alubari. At the threshold of the village, a Ministry of Power Board said that the electrification of this village was done under the Rajiv Grameena Vidyutikaran Yojana. In all, Alubari has three houses! Cabbage patches down the slope looked interesting and the earthy and thickly veggie fragrance of tomato patches made me take in lungful after lungful.

We went birding deep into the forest and at a certain point I decided to return as the fog was preventing bird sightings. There were lot of rights and lefts when we went in so I tried my best to correctly retrace my footsteps back to our Bolero. My landmarks were a culvert, an enormous uprooted tree and a huge pile of rocks and boulders that had once tumbled down the mountains and immovably settled down one on top of the other, down on the slope, following the dictates of gravity. When I walked, completely and utterly alone in the dense and deep jungle with fog-induced darkness and bird calls around me, my paramount fear was not of being attacked by a wild animal. My only fear was about losing my way! You see, if we follow the jungle protocol of not disturbing its environment and inhabitants, then it can be one of the safest and the most gorgeous places on earth to be in. Do not disturb or fear the jungle. Respect it!

What can I tell you about the Rhododendrons? Nothing much except that I fell for them like a tonne of bricks! Floral magnificence, a thousand times over! I would be doing a disservice to the beauty of a rhododendron if I so much as attempt to describe it. No language is rich enough to describe the beautiful flower.

Now the things that can bring forth the process of scratching till your skin goes red are stinging nettles, leeches and *dum dum* (local name) - a very tiny insect that can leave you scratching for days on end. The leeches and the *dum dums* drew blood and how! It made us wonder whether we came for a birding camp or a blood donation camp! Now for the nettles' sting theory - there were a variety of nettles that grow to about an adult's knee length. Some nettles are so *khatarnaak* (for want of an English equivalent), that even if you brush against them while fully clad in your jeans, you will soon be presented with a 12-hour burning sensation. Some nettles are less *khatarnaak* but I would advise against testing the degree of *khatarnaakness* of each nettle because the resultant burning sensation is tremendously stressful and painful.

And now for the sole reason for visiting Eaglenest - Birds and a passion for them! We came back completely soul-satisfied. Nature is still pristine in Arunachal, hence there is tremendous bird life. Almost all the birds in my list were lifers! Here a bird. There a bird. Everywhere a bird, bird! Birds! Birds everywhere and the eye forgot to blink! (With apologies to Samuel Taylor Coleridge and his fine poem called "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner").

Bird sighting frequency was high and easy. Flitting through the vines, perched on lower branches or atop the canopies, birds were all over the place. My two companions were the lucky ones who got to see the sensational Bugun Liocichla (*Liocichla bugunorum*). I missed it but I have no regrets because I am going to visit the Eaglenest again. Once is not enough!

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Report – Evening Trip to Miankhan Guda, 17th August 2014

Text: Sathvik Reddy Nimma; Photos: Humayun Taher

The much awaited evening birding commenced at last. And our first evening birding trip was planned for Miankhan Guda, which is the Gandipet Lake back-waters. All the participants were very enthusiastic for this trip. Although the month of August is usually rainy, birding in the rain that too at a lake, can be amazing to watch. However, the rain gods weren't invited for this evening trip, so they did not visit.

We gathered at NMDC, Masab Tank promptly at 14:30 hours. The response was very encouraging with about 11 members attending the first evening trip. Considering the fact that this was a Sunday post-lunch session and the working professionals usually busy themselves in evening grocery shopping for the coming week, this was a fair-sized group. After a little wait, we carried on to the venue.

Once the convoy reached the location we had to fuel ourselves with tea to recover from our 45 minute post-lunch journey. Then we started birding in real earnest. We were welcomed by the typical flying and singing Ashy-crowned Sparrow Larks (*Eremopterix griseus*), busy pecking at food. We saw the Indian Grey Hornbill (*Ocyceros birostris*) on the branch of a tree; it hurriedly took off and disappeared into the distance.

Brahminy Kite

As we moved further we noticed a bird near the bank of the lake which looked remarkably like a large raptor, judging by the silhouette. We had visions of eagles but, alas! It was a Brahminy Kite (*Haliastur indus*), munching on a fish. Its presence made everyone optimistic that there was a lot more in store for the rest of the evening! As we scouted for more species we observed a Purple Heron (*Ardea purpurea*) leg deep in the water. Having already spotted us near the bank, this was its clever way of evading us, as it continued looking for its snack of fish, which it finally got.

Purple Heron

Interest suddenly increased as Humayun, our veteran birder directed everyone's attention to the Black-winged Stilt (*Himantopus himantopus*). "What's so interesting about Black-winged Stilts?" I thought. They are everywhere, and their presence itself tells us that the lake is getting increasingly polluted! This is probably because youngsters from nearby colleges use it for their 'after-party dumping'; the surrounding *dhabas* dump all their waste into the lake and human remains after cremation are also most probably being dumped into the lake from the nearby villages. Anyway Humayun succeeded in grabbing our attention as he continued, "Black-winged Stilt… with chicks!"

Black-winged Stilt with chicks

We watched with great interest as the parent Stilt took the two furry little chicks on a stroll along the bank. Some village dogs seemed to be eyeing the chicks, but they were mobbed by some of the adult Stilts. The chicks slowly walked into the shadow of Open-billed Storks (*Anastomus oscitans*) until the adults returned. The adult Open-billed Storks with juveniles snacked on shells and molluscs on the banks as we clicked away.

Three well-camouflaged Sandgrouse relaxed on the lake shore. There was some discussion and the field guides had to be consulted before we could identify them as the Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse (*Pterocles exustus*).

While we continued to look at these, one of the members thought he had observed a Nightjar but, to our dismay we couldn't confirm it as the light was rapidly fading.

Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse (M)

Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse (F)

As the evening advanced, we all sat down at the lake shore, talking about birds and habitat. Four of us slowly walked a little further to scout the area one last time before finalising the list of the birds, and succeeded in spotting a few more species. While we talked, we noticed the Brahminy Kite returning to the spot where we had seen the Stilt with chicks. As the Kite circled around, it was mobbed by the Stilts but this time they had allied themselves with a Red-wattled Lapwing (*Vanellus indicus*). This seemed to suggest that the Lapwing too had offspring somewhere close by.

Overall I would say that it was a very fruitful evening of birding. Although equally enjoyable, I think that morning tends to become a bit tiring once we cross 11AM. But evening birding has so much in store as the movement of birds always keeps everyone on their toes and the weather gods also treat everyone very well with pleasant weather. Our birding was certainly very interesting, as we got to observe a variety of behaviour - the frenzied stilt and lapwing mafia chasing away the dogs and mobbing the kite; the wading Pheasant-tailed (*Hydrophasianus chirurgus*) and Bronze-winged (*Metopidius indicus*) Jacanas; the Purple Heron, standing leg deep in the water gulping a beak-length fish.

The rest of the day, we traversed the back-waters, but the Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse eluded us successfully after the initial glimpse. We progressed in our species count with Common Coot (*Fulica atra*) and Little Ringed Plovers (*Charadrius dubius*) in good numbers, bringing the list up to around 50 species. One who does morning birding needs to do evening birding also and I'm sure you will definitely pledge to take it up and make it as successful for the BSAP as our regular morning birding outings. I look forward to seeing more members joining in this initiative.

The list of species sighted during this trip is given below:

Sl#	Status	Species	Scientific name	IUCN Status
1	R	Little Grebe	*Tachybaptus ruficollis*	
2	R	Little Cormorant	*Phalacrocorax niger*	
3	R	Large Cormorant	*Phalacrocorax carbo*	
4	R	Darter	*Anhinga melanogaster*	NT
5	R	Little Egret	*Egretta garzetta*	
6	R	Great Egret	*Egretta alba*	
7	R	Intermediate Egret	*Egretta intermedia*	
8	R	Grey Heron	*Ardea cinerea*	
9	R	Purple Heron	*Ardea purpurea*	
10	R	Eastern Cattle Egret	*Bubulcus coromandus*	
11	R	Indian Pond Heron	*Ardeola grayii*	
12	R	Painted Stork	*Mycteria leucocephala*	NT
13	R	Asian Openbill	*Anastomus oscitans*	
14	R	Lesser Whistling-duck	*Dendrocygna javanica*	
15	R	Cotton Teal	*Nettapus coromandelianus*	
16	R	Spot-billed Duck	*Anas poecilorhyncha*	
17	R	Brahminy Kite	*Haliastur indus*	

Sl#	Status	Species	Scientific name	IUCN Status
18	R	Grey Francolin	*Francolinus pondicerianus*	
19	R	Indian Peafowl	*Pavo cristatus*	
20	R	Common Coot	*Fulica atra*	
21	R	Pheasant-tailed Jacana	*Hydrophasianus chirurgus*	
22	R	Bronze-winged Jacana	*Metopidius indicus*	
23	M	Little Ringed Plover	*Charadrius dubius*	
24	R	Red-wattled Lapwing	*Vanellus indicus*	
25	M	Common Sandpiper	*Actitis hypoleucos*	
26	R	Black-winged Stilt	*Himantopus himantopus*	
27	R	Small Pratincole	*Glareola lactea*	
28	R	River Tern	*Sterna aurantia*	
29	M	Whiskered Tern	*Chlidonias hybrida*	
30	R	Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse	*Pterocles exustus*	
31	R	Rose-ringed Parakeet	*Psittacula krameri*	
32	R	Asian Koel	*Eudynamys scolopacea*	
33	R	Common Hawk Cuckoo	*Hierococcyx varius*	
34	R	Asian Palm-swift	*Cypsiurus balasiensis*	
35	R	White-breasted Kingfisher	*Halcyon smyrnensis*	
36	R	Indian Roller	*Coracias benghalensis*	
37	R	Indian Grey Hornbill	*Ocyceros birostris*	
38	R	Jerdon's Bushlark	*Mirafra affinis*	
39	R	Ashy-crowned Finch-lark	*Eremopterix griseus*	
40	R,M	Red-rumped Swallow	*Hirundo daurica*	
41	R	White-browed Wagtail	*Motacilla maderaspatensis*	
42	R	Paddyfield Pipit	*Anthus rufulus*	
43	R	Large Grey Babbler	*Turdoides malcolmi*	
44	R	Ashy Prinia	*Prinia socialis*	
45	R	Purple-rumped Sunbird	*Leptocoma zeylonica*	
46	R	Baya Weaver	*Ploceus philippinus*	
47	R	Black Drongo	*Dicrurus macrocercus*	
48	R	House Crow	*Corvus splendens*	

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Bird Humour

(From Times of India, 02-10-2013)

Bird of the Month

Text and photos: Umesh Mani

Yellow-wattled Lapwing (*Vanellus malabaricus*)

Yellow-wattled Lapwing Adult (L) and Juvenile (R)
(Sainikpuri, 01-08-2010)

Order: Charadriiformes
Family: Charadriidae
Genus: *Vanellus*
Species: *V. malabaricus*
Size: 26-28 cm

Description &distribution: The Yellow-wattled Lapwing is a medium-sized plover that is endemic to the Indian subcontinent. Its dull grey-brown upperparts extend up to a black crown, from which they are separated by a thin white band. The most distinctive feature, the bright yellow 'wattles' are found at the base of the greyish-black bill, while the chin is black. The grey-brown of the upperparts extends around to the neck and upper breast, bordered by a thin black stripe; the rest of the underparts are predominantly white. The tail has a sub-terminal black band not extending into the outer tail feathers. The inner half of the wings has a white bar, and the legs are yellow. The sexes are alike, but the males may be slightly larger and have longer wings and tarsi. A size increase is also seen in the northern part of the range. Juveniles have a brown crown and some of the other colours may be duller. There are no recognised sub-species.

Behaviour: The Yellow-wattled Lapwing is usually seen in ones and twos, or in small groups, in a variety of open lowland habitats similar to the Red-wattled Lapwing - open grasslands, ploughed fields, etc – but seems to prefer somewhat drier areas. It makes fast, darting runs to catch insects while foraging. It is a skittish species and does not allow close approaches. In the face of perceived threats to a nest or the chicks, it may move away unobtrusively, to draw potential predators away from the nest. The chicks squat flat on the ground and freeze when they hear their parents' alarm calls. The usual call is a sharp *'tchee-it'*. The diet consists primarily of beetles, termites and other invertebrates. The Yellow-wattled Lapwing adopts the 'belly-soaking' method, wetting its breast feathers and using this water to cool its eggs or chicks. The species shows short local movements in response to rain.

Nesting: The Yellow-wattled Lapwing breeds mainly in the hot season from March to May. Its nest is nothing more than a shallow scrape in the ground, and the typical clutch of four eggs is well-camouflaged among a collection of pebbles. The 27-30 day incubation period culminates in the more-or-less simultaneous hatching of the eggs. The chicks are nidifugous, leaving their nests shortly after hatching while they follow their parents during foraging. The parents may raise a second brood in the same season, particularly if the first one fails.

Local name: The Yellow-wattled Lapwing is known as *'zirdi'* in Hindi, *'chitawa'* in Telugu, *'alkaati'* in Tamil and *'peetmukhi tittibhak'* in Sanskrit.

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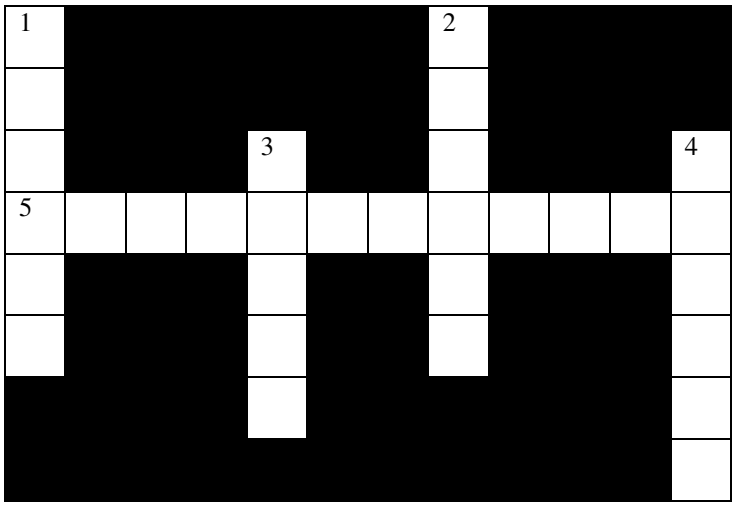
BIRDING CROSSWORD #29

Umesh Mani

The answers to the clues given below are bird names or other birding-related terms. Let's see how many you can find!
(*Solutions in next month's Pitta*)



ACROSS

5 - US Marine comes to Pak-occupied Kashmir looking for a sea-bird? (8,4)

DOWN

1 - P not in to imagine the arrangement made by this bird (6)

2 - May act as a decoy using a piece of furniture (6)

3 - Credit own account off the top of the head! (5)

4 - Many a bird cries for parrots (6)

Solutions to Crossword #28 (Pitta, June 2014)
ACROSS: 3 – SHIKRA, 5 – BESRA, 6 – TAWNY
DOWN: 1 – TEALS, 2 - SHAMA, 4 – AVOCET, 5 - BUFFY

For Private Circulation Only
Editors: Shanti Mani, Umesh Mani **Email:** bsap.pitta@gmail.com

For information, write to: Birdwatchers' Society of Andhra Pradesh, PO Box 45, Banjara Hills, Hyderabad – 500034. **E-group:** http://groups.google.co.in/group/bsap_online. **Website:** www.bsap.in. **Society membership** (in Rs.): Annual: 500 per annum; Student: 200 per annum; Corporate: 2000 per annum; Life: 3000. (*Add Rs 75 for outstation cheques.)*